



Press Release **For Immediate Release**

U.S. Embassy and Consulates in Mexico Process 2 Million Visitor Visa Applications in Fiscal Year 2012

Mexico City, September 27, 2012—Ambassador Anthony Wayne and the Principal Officers and other leaders at the nine visa-issuing Consulates General in Mexico today celebrated World Tourism Day and commemorated the adjudication of two million visitor visa applications by the United States Mission to Mexico during the current fiscal year, a nearly 30 percent increase over last year. This high level of productivity was made possible by new processes implemented within the past year, primarily the introduction of off-site Applicant Service Centers (ASCs) and the extension of the Interview Waiver Program for visa renewals, making the visa application process faster, easier, and more efficient than it has ever been for Mexican applicants.

To commemorate the attainment of the two million mark, Ambassador Wayne greeted one of the families receiving visas September 27, wishing them a pleasant visit in the United States. The Ambassador addressed visa applicants in the process of completing their interviews at the Embassy, saying, "More Americans visit Mexico each year than any other country, and Mexicans visit the United States more than they do any other country in the world. Travel between the United States and Mexico reinforces the already close economic, cultural, and familial bonds between our two nations and peoples. Seeing new sights, meeting new people, and living new experiences changes each of us for the better. As a frequent traveler, I know it's also just plain fun."

Responding to President Obama's call to facilitate travel to the United States, the U.S. Embassy has made significant investments to encourage business travel and tourism to the United States from Mexico. We have recently opened three new Applicant Service Centers (ASCs), bringing the total to 14 across the country, allowing applicants more points of service than ever before. The ASCs are open six days a week and aim to provide excellent customer service. The U.S. consular operation in Mexico is among the largest and most efficient in the world. The consulate in Tijuana is housed in a modern facility with expanded consular service capacity, which opened in 2011, while the consulate in Monterrey will move into a new building in 2014.

Renewals of visas, even those expired for up to 48 months, can be accomplished in many cases without a personal interview with a consular official. Over 40 percent of applicants are seeking to renew a visa, and many can complete their part of the reapplication process by appearing at the Applicant Service Centers (ASC) to collect the required biometrics – a fast and simple process.

Applicants who are applying for the first time or renewing a visa that expired more than four years prior are free to apply at any of our nine consulates or at the Embassy, whichever location is most convenient. Students applying for visas to study in the United States are a priority and are always able to secure an appointment within a week. We also have additional capacity to accommodate situations involving urgent or unexpected travel. Applicants generally receive their approved visa within one week of applying, and the cost of delivering their passports is included in the visa fee.

We remind all potential travelers to apply for their visa well in advance, as a small percentage of cases require additional time to process. If you are considering traveling during the winter holidays, now is the ideal time to apply, since we have many appointments available. The first step in applying for any visa is to visit the Embassy's website (<http://spanish.mexico.usembassy.gov>), or that of your closest consulate, clicking on "visas" in the upper-left part of the screen, and then following the step-by-step instructions. Applicants may easily schedule appointments and pay fees through our convenient online service and call

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Tel 5080-2253, 5080-2000, Fax 5080-2892 <http://mexico.usembassy.gov> Email: emlistmx@state.gov
Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/#!/mexico.usembassy> **Twitter:** USEmbassyMex **Blog:** <http://mexico.usembassy.gov/blog/>

centers. The payment of visa fees can be made in a variety of ways: online or on the telephone by credit card, or at a local bank.

We look forward to welcoming your visa application, and wish you a wonderful visit to the United States!

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For high resolution photographs: [Flickrlink](#)

Travelers considering a trip to the United States are encouraged to visit DiscoverAmerica.com and VisitUSA.com.mx, where they can find a wealth of information for tourists.

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